

REMARKS

Claims remaining in the present patent application are numbered 1-21. The rejections and comments of the Examiner set forth in the Office Action dated October 7, 2003 have been carefully considered by the Applicants. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider and allow the remaining claims.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

The present Office Action rejected Claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,336,137 B1). Applicants have reviewed the above cited references and respectfully submit that the present invention as recited in Claims 1-21, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the Lee et al. reference.

With regard to the Lee et al. reference, Applicants respectfully note that the Lee et al. reference has an effective filing date of March 31, 2000. The present invention was conceived by a date at least as early as March 4, 1999. A declaration attesting to this is being filed concurrently with the instant response. Accordingly, the present invention as recited in Claims 1-21 is not anticipated by the Lee et al. reference and the rejection of Claims 1-21 is overcome.

CONCLUSION

In light of the facts and arguments presented herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected Claims.

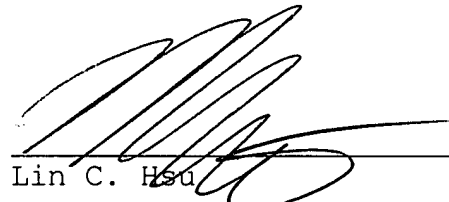
Based on the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1-21 overcome the rejections of record. Therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these Claims.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wagner, Murabito & Hao LLP

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Lin C. Hsu  
Reg. No.: 46,315  
Two North Market Street  
Third Floor  
San Jose, California 95113